



# CONNECTICUT HEALTH EDUCATION EXCHANGE

Volume VI A newsletter about health education issues, especially HIV/STD and teen pregnancy prevention Spring 2002

## The Connecticut Health Education Exchange



Welcome to the sixth edition of the Connecticut Health Education Exchange. This semiannual newsletter is intended to inform educators and other youth servicing professionals of local, state, and national efforts related to coordinated school health education programs, especially HIV/STD (sexually transmitted diseases) and pregnancy prevention.

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This newsletter is reviewed and approved by the SDE and DPH Materials Review Committee.



"Courage allows the successful person to fail—and to learn powerful lessons from the failure—so that in the end, it was not a failure at all."

Maya Angelou

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## Fit, Healthy, and Eager to Learn: Teaming Up for Kids' Success

The State Department of Education, Public Health, and Children and Families, the University of Connecticut, and the New England Dairy and Food Council would like to thank everyone who participated in the first statewide Coordinated School Health Programs (CSHP) Summit. The Summit, held at the Water's Edge Resort, attracted over 340 people in 55 school-community teams.

Nationally-renowned speakers from the Centers for Disease Control, the National Association of School Boards of Education, as well as national consultants, spoke on current health and wellness initiatives, the link to health and academic achievement, and partnership development. Participants were also led through resource modules designed to help assess policies and programming in their school communities and were able to begin a dialogue addressing health issues. Three "living example" school districts (Danbury, Granby, New Haven) shared their experiences in implementing CSHP. Said one participant, "This was an excellent workshop—Let's get going Connecticut!"



## WINGS: Successful in Ashford

Great things are happening at Ashford School! Marti Hardisty, a health educator for grades K-8, has created an innovative program designed to teach students problem-solving skills, teamwork, communication skills, and character education.

Winning Innovations for Nurturing Growth and Self-Respect (WINGS) is a program Marti created eleven years ago and is designed to provide students with an opportunity to challenge themselves physically, socially, and emotionally in a safe environment. It is a two-day event each year for seventh and eighth graders, and it won an Outstanding Program in Health Education Award from Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) in 1992.

Showing Others Acceptance and Respect (SOAR) teach-

See **WINGS** page 3

## Feature Teacher ~ KELLY STOKOE



The Connecticut Health Education Exchange would like to recognize and congratulate Kelly Stokoe, health educator at Farmington High School, as our fifth Feature Teacher. Kelly has been teaching at Farmington High School since 1993. During that time, she has implemented the Junior and Senior health education programs, integrated a violence prevention program into the existing curriculum, and coordinated the Safe & Drug Free Schools Grant. Ms. Stokoe is certified in both health and physical education, and in 1989 was one of the first full-time athletic trainers hired in the public schools in Connecticut.

Kelly describe the best thing about teaching health education as “the interaction with the students” and “creating a positive and safe environment where discussions can be had.” Dr. Timothy Breslin, the principal at Farmington high School, describes Kelly as a “credit to the teaching profession . . . because she understands the significant health issues that impact high school students and she is willing to talk about them in candid, sensitive ways.” Her extra curricular activities include Peer Leader Co-Advisor, Senior Class Co-Advisor, and Vice-President for the Sounding Board for Youth. She chaperones events at the high school and was a guest speaker at the Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) convention in 2000 and

2001. The Connecticut Health Education Exchange would like to thank Kelly for her dedication in promoting health and wellness to the students in Farmington.

*Do you know an outstanding teacher in the field of health education? If you would like to nominate a fellow professional to be highlighted in our next issue, please fill out the enclosed form and send it to the contributing editor by August 31, 2002 for our fall issue. The nominee must be an active classroom teacher. Let's take time to honor and recognize the high quality educators with whom we work each day!*



## The Coordinated Health Education Cadre of Trainers

### Dynamic Professional Development Opportunity

Planning for professional development workshops? We can provide innovative skills-based professional development in the areas of HIV/STD prevention at no cost with CEUs. The State Department of Education and the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with local school districts and community-based organizations have developed a Coordinated Health Education Cadre of Trainers (CHEC). The purpose of CHEC is to provide quality, interactive, skills-based professional development workshops that promote health-enhancing behaviors in youth. The current focus is in HIV/STD prevention.

If you would like more information, or wish to schedule a workshop, please contact Bonnie Edmondson at 860-713-6578.



## Web Sites & Resources

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data and a free CD of the YRBS data can be obtained for the following Website: [www.cdc.gov/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/yrbs)
- *Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy*. Available from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen pregnancy at [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org) (highly recommended)
- Healthy Youth Funding Database. Find out what funding sources are available to support health-related programs at [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp) - click on “funding.”



## Updating or Rewriting Your Health Education Curriculum?

### Here are some helpful recommended resources:

1. The CSDE Health and Safety Curriculum Framework and Tracemap is available online at: [www.state.ct.us/sde/](http://www.state.ct.us/sde/) - click on “curriculum.”
2. The Health and Safety Student Performance Task Assessments are now posted on the Website: [www.ctcurriculum.org](http://www.ctcurriculum.org) for educators to download and use. The Performance Tasks reflect the content areas in the Curriculum Framework.
3. The National Health Education Standards are available online at [www.healthteacher.com/teachersupports/literacy2.asp](http://www.healthteacher.com/teachersupports/literacy2.asp).
4. Refer to the resource section in the Newsletter and obtain a copy of “Emerging Answers.”

For further assistance with your health and safety curriculum development contact:

Bonnie J. Edmondson, HIV/STD, Health Education,  
860-713-6578

Nancy Pugliese, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention, 860-713-6582

Barb Westwater, Physical Education and Health Education,  
860-713-6748

**WINGS** continued from page 1



Grade 3 students engage in a SOAR activity

ers character education to grades one through five. One of Marti's favorite activities is on responsibility with discussion beginning in the classroom about what responsibility is and how one shows responsibility for oneself and for others. Students are led through a series of activities addressing trust and communication that are reinforced with the classroom teacher.

Students in grade eight experience something called Flight School, where they work on team building skills including problem solving and communication skills in a nonthreatening environment and get their Wings to go on to high school.

Smaller **Winning Innovations for Nurturing Growth and Self-Respect (SWING)** is a day-long event hosted by high school students from grades one through five in the spring. The high school students who have graduated from WINGS return for a day of community service and lead the younger students through several teambuilding activities. This is very well received by all.

If you have any questions or if you would like further information on WINGS, please contact Marti Hardisty at 860-429-6419.



## What's Happening

- Congratulations to Kathleen Marsan, School Nurse in Southington and Bob Doolittle, a K-5 Health Education Resource Teacher in Glastonbury for being named the Outstanding School Nurse and Health Educator respectively for the Connecticut Association of School Health (CASH). They will be recognized at the Annual CASH Banquet on May 20. If you are interested in obtaining more information on the banquet call 203-397-1480.
- For information on Youth Empowerment and developing a peer education program for HIV/AIDS presentations contact Sasha Abrahamson or Mio Galarza, Directors of the "Youth Reacting to AIDS: Youth Empowerment Conference" at 203-748-4077.
- The State Department of Education would like to thank the middle and high school principals and lead health teachers that were randomly selected and participated in the School Health profile. Look for statewide results and a report in the fall of 2002.

## Connecticut for Healthy LGBTQ Youth

The Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Public Health recently partnered with the American Psychological Association as a pilot state for the Healthy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Questioning (LGBQ) students project. This project is working to create and ensure a safe and nurturing school climate for LGBQ youth and healthy outcomes.

To best address these concerns for high school-aged LGBQ youth, Connecticut will select and train a cadre of trainers consisting of school nurses, school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists to (1) increase the capacity of professionals to provide health and mental health services specifically addressing the needs of LGBQ students; (2) encourage consistency in the use of interventions and service opportunities for LGBQ youth that have proven to reduce risk behaviors and that promote healthy outcomes for youth; and (3) increase connections between support services and the LGBQ population.

The cadre of trainers will conduct awareness sessions starting in the fall of 2002 as well as statewide one-day, discipline-specific professional development sessions. These professional development sessions will introduce and train social workers, psychologists, school counselors, and nurses in specific modules that provide research-based information and strategies for best addressing the physical and emotional health issues of LGBQ youth.

Following the one-day training on specific modules, a two-day summer institute, cosponsored by the Special Education Resource Center (SERC), will be offered for school teams to develop strategic school plans focusing on creating safe and nurturing climates for LGBQ youth.

For more information on this project, you can visit the American Psychological Association's Website at <http://apa.org/ed/hlgb.html> or call Bonnie J. Edmondson, HIV Prevention Coordinator and Health Education Consultant at 860-713-6578.



# Bright Ideas for Classroom Activities

## Identifying Honest Opinions about HIV/AIDS

**Audience:** Junior/Senior High Students

**Goal:** To uncover stereotypes and misinformation about HIV that could result in higher-risk behaviors

**Directions:** Pass out a 3x5 card to each student and have them number the card 1-7, without putting their name on the card. Read the following statements and ask the students to write agree or disagree on their card:

1. I trust my instincts about whether a person is infected with HIV.
2. It is unrealistic to expect teens to be abstinent.
3. If we all carried a card that showed our HIV status, we would all be safe.
4. I would be scared to be friends with someone who is HIV positive.
5. If I get HIV, I would have no one to blame but myself.
6. I don't have to worry about HIV.
7. I know my sexual partner would tell me if he/she were infected with HIV.

Collect the cards, shuffle them, and redistribute them to the class. Make one side of the room the AGREE side, and one the DISAGREE side of the room. Read each statement again, and have students move themselves to the side of the room that is written on their card. Students must defend the position that is written on their card, which may or may not be their own opinion. Process the activity by confronting any myths, stereotypes, or misinformation.

**Modification:** Create your own questions that may be more age-appropriate for your grade level, or reflective of your content. You may also use this activity for any topic area. It works especially well for topics such as sexual orientation and substance abuse issues where students may be reluctant to share an honest opinion.

**Source:** Maggie Meriwether, Health Educator, Ridgefield High School

*If you have a "Bright Idea" to share, please send it to the contributing editor.*

### Connecticut Health Education Exchange

**Bonnie J. Edmondson, HIV Prevention Project Coordinator**

Connecticut State Department of Education, Division of School Improvement, Bureau of School, Family, Community Partnerships

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# The Connecticut Health Education Exchange Nomination Form

## "Feature Program"

Great things are happening across the state in health / wellness education! Let's hear from you. Do you know of an exemplary health/wellness education program/project that you would like to nominate as the "feature program" in the next edition of the Connecticut Health Education Exchange newsletter? If so, please fill out this form and return by August 31, 2002 to be considered for the fall edition.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's name (if other than yourself): \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe in a short paragraph why this program/project is exemplary and should be considered as a "feature program."

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*All nominations will be considered for future editions of the Connecticut Health Education Exchange.*

**Submit nomination form to:**

Maggie Meriwether, Contributing Editor

Ridgefield High School

700 North Salem Road

Ridgefield, CT 06877

Phone: 203-431-2891, FAX: 203-438-3785, Email: Mag8@msn.com



# The Connecticut Health Education Exchange Nomination Form

## "Feature Teacher"

Great things are happening across the state in health / wellness education! Let's hear from you. Do you know an outstanding health educator that you would like to nominate as the "feature teacher" in the next edition of the Connecticut Health Education Exchange newsletter? If so, please fill out this form and return by August 31, 2002 to be considered for the fall edition. All nominees must be active classroom teachers.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's name (if other than yourself): \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe in a short paragraph why this teacher is exemplary and should be considered as a "Feature Teacher."

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